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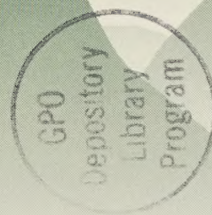
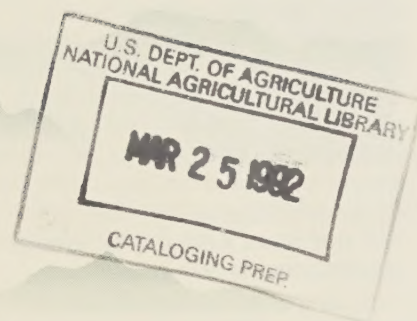
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# Arizona Recreation Initiative

## *An Update . . .*



14 MAR 1991

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

PREPARED BY  
Forest  
Service

Southwestern  
Region



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**So...you've been in meetings all week...near misses on the road...and you can't remember when you and your significant other talked about something besides who was supposed to feed the dog (or the kids).**

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The natural solution to stress in the 90's is, well, natural—your National Forest. Not a new idea, in fact, Arizona's forests have become so popular, the Forest Service system as we know it just can't keep up. Did you know that Arizona is our nation's fourth most popular state for forest recreation? We have 17 million recreation visitor days per year, and if

that doesn't it's a bunch. Colorado, and Oregon get more forest visitors than that.

Here's what's been happening. From 1975 to 1985, Arizona's population has grown 40 percent...not quite what Alaska and Nevada have seen, but close. Meanwhile, Arizona has had the

the population. Thus, our young, affluent population has caused additional recreation pressures. And the situation is not likely to change any time soon. Arizona's population is projected to increase 33 percent by 1995.

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## Situation

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Except for the northern part of the Kaibab National Forest (north of the Grand Canyon), almost all National Forest lands are now within a short driving time of Phoenix and Tucson. In response to the increased demand, the State of Arizona is continuing to spend millions of dollars to improve our highways. With all these people, and all these great roads leading to all of our great forests, recreation sites are getting swamped! Unfortunately, there just has never been a lot of money earmarked for recreation. Forest Service facilities have been underbuilt, and not very well maintained. And now, even if we had the money to maintain the facilities—we'd still fall short of meeting the recreation demand.

Sound grim? Well, there is a plan and hope, thanks to the encouragement of Arizona's Congressional Delegation. A plan called The Arizona Initiative can accomplish our forest land recreation construction and backlog maintenance needs in just four years.

Here are some of the elements of the Initiative:

- Estimated funding needed each year for the next four years is \$11.4 million. Total estimated funding needed is \$45.6 million.
- In 1990, the Forest Service allocated \$8 million for this Initiative.
- Challenge Cost-Share opportunities will be pursued vigorously and made an important part of this Initiative. Under the Challenge Cost-Share Program, an organization puts up some money to fund a project, and the Forest Service matches the amount—together a partnership is formed to accomplish what neither could afford to do alone.
- All of the recreation facility maintenance backlog should be caught up by the end of fiscal year 1993. From that point on, an additional \$6.2 million will be necessary annually for continued operation and maintenance of our public facilities.

So, here we are with a beginning. We, the supervisors of

Arizona's forests have conjured up a vision of a different and perhaps better outdoor world—a vision composed of practical knowledge, reasonable challenges, and attainable goals—The Arizona Initiative.

This report highlights what has been accomplished under the Initiative. There is still much to be done, but with your support, we can continue to give special attention to recreation on Arizona's six National Forests and plan for quality outdoor recreation opportunities of the future.

The Arizona Recreation Initiative is designed to make our outdoor world more fun and inviting for all of us. The goals we have are ambitious, but with your help, attainable. And, we believe they are worth every bit of effort!

Sincerely,



**The Forest Supervisors  
of Arizona**



# Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests

Perhaps one of Arizona's best-kept secrets is the lush, thickly forested Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests—a far cry from the desert state most think of as Arizona. But apparently, the secret is getting out because recreation demands on this forest have grown incredibly. Our response...

- ◆ four new campgrounds and expansion of an existing one,

- ◆ tables and grills added to some popular areas,

- ◆ partnerships created that could increase developed recreation sites to accommodate some 20 percent more visitors, (these partnerships have already brought more than two and a half million dollars to the forest for recreation development),

- ◆ thirteen miles of new trail (10 miles near Big Lake, three on the Mogollon Rim),

- ◆ a partnership with Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association (SNCHA) to publish and market a guide to the Rim and its trails,

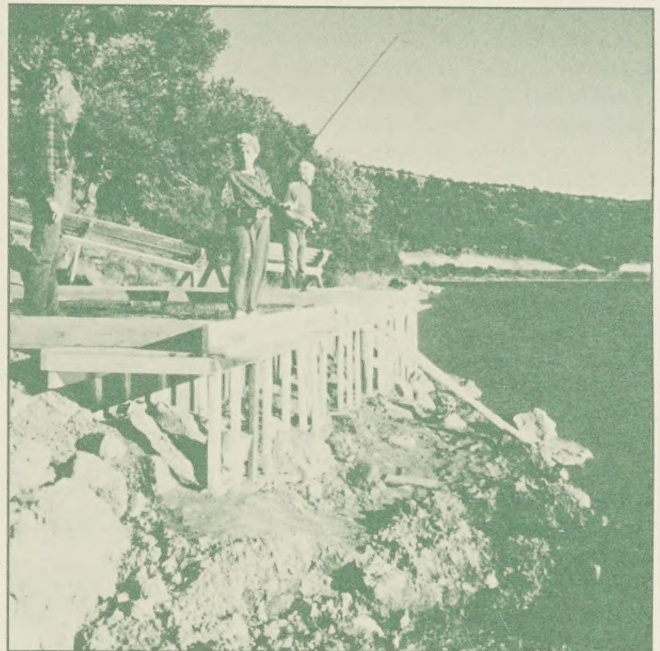
- ◆ two new observation sites on the Rim with an interconnecting

paved trail for the physically challenged,

- ◆ a parking lot on the Rim (built by the Arizona Department of Transportation) for a proposed visitor center,

- ◆ information kiosks at trailheads, recreation sites and district offices,

- ◆ work is underway at Nelson Reservoir to provide fishing access for people with disabilities. Improvements that are being constructed there include 300 feet of concrete ramp, 2 fishing stations, each accommodating several persons, and a special access toilet. The project is 85% complete with completion expected by next spring.



*Local fishermen use one of the fishing stations while it is under construction.*

- ◆ expanded district office hours to be more responsive to visitors (what's more, it's easier to find our offices now—we've put up some tastefully designed signs leading the way),

- ◆ a reservation system for almost all the forest's campground sites,

- ◆ two new sales outlets where material about the Forest can be purchased (this is done through the Northern Arizona Natural History Association—a non-profit organization that puts the money from sales back into Forest projects),

- ◆ more interpretive programs (guided nature walks, campground talks, tours, etc.),

- ◆ plans for at least three major recreation facilities along the Coronado Trail Scenic Byway with help from Arizona Department of Transportation, Phelps Dodge and others,

- ◆ and, maintenance to critical water and sewer systems at key developed recreation sites.



*Trails, trails and more trails.*



# Kaibab National Forest

One of the Kaibab National Forest's charms is its proximity to the majestic Grand Canyon...a worldwide attraction. Folks are fascinated with the area and we are currently working on ways to help them learn more about it. These plans include the Kaibab Plateau—North Rim Parkway Scenic Byway and the new Kaibab Plateau Visitor Center. Meanwhile, like the Coconino, computerized recreation guides with information and pictures will be available at Forest Service offices, visitor centers, shopping malls, sporting goods stores, libraries and other public buildings.

We're excited about some changes you'll be seeing at our campgrounds, too! The Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association will be working with us to bring lectures and audio-visual type programs to folks in the woods. Kaibab Lake will soon have an amphitheatre and environmental information programs. Because of its location near Interstate 40, we hope travelers as well as recreationists from KOA campgrounds and nearby towns will stop by to learn more about our precious forest.

In the meantime, we are working on sanitary dump stations and ramadas at Kaibab Lake and Dogtown Lake campgrounds.

The Kaibab is rich in pioneer history—the evidence is on the ground in the form of some very famous trails. We think it would be great if more people could get to these trails and walk in the footsteps of the rugged pioneers. In order to do that, we have designed eight trailheads which will provide access to the Beale Wagon and Overland Road trails. We have produced two brochures which provide interpretive information on these trails. There are other recreational trails as well. Two trailheads will access trails on the popular Bill Williams Mountain, while six will link up with the Arizona Trail. The Arizona Trail spans the entire state, and eventually will go from the Mexico border to Utah. Several trailheads, such as the one for Kendrick Mountain

## Beale Wagon Road Historic Trail



Pioneer survey team camped at Wagon's Park on the Beale Wagon Road, December 1867.  
Photo courtesy of the Boston Public Library

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## Overland Road Historic Trail



near Williams,  
Kaibab Hall Museum

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New ramada being constructed at Kaibab Lake.

Wilderness, will provide trailer parking and hitching posts to accommodate increasing demands for horseback riding.

Just like everywhere else in Arizona, we wouldn't mind having more water. We hear from recreationists that more lakes would be nice. So, we are looking at nine possible spots that may turn out to be good places for lakes—we'll keep you posted.



## Prescott National Forest

Rich in remnants from ancient civilizations, the Prescott National Forest is working to protect Sinaqua Indian ruins, yet continue to provide public access to these structures. One such structure is a small cliff dwelling, about a half mile within the western boundary of Sycamore Canyon Wilderness. The site has suffered both intentional and unintentional impacts from visitors, as well as from natural deterioration over the past 800 years. With the help of volunteers, Forest Service archeologists have been able to do work that will keep it from any further deterioration...another example of what can be done through The Arizona Recreation Initiative. Since the stabilization work was completed, the site has been nominated and accepted into the National Register of Historic Places, which ultimately means more protection for the ancient ruins.

Remnants of a more recent point in history have been saved and



*Access to the ruins was challenging. Photo courtesy of Richard Lord.*

made available to the public. An historic powerline on the forest was being upgraded by Arizona Public Service Company. But instead of destroying the outdated structures, the power company agreed to move the historic towers to a place where parking could be provided just off Interstate 17, north of Cordes Junction. Interpretive signing was

added to summarize the history of the old line.

Elsewhere on the forest is the Verde Wild and Scenic River where recreation demand is high. Construction has begun for facilities at the head of the river—facilities such as ramadas, toilets, changing rooms, interpretive signs, foot paths, vehicular access for launching rafts, canoes, and kayaks, and parking. This project is being done in cooperation with the town of Camp Verde and the State of Arizona's lake improvement funds.

And you say you want more trails? The Prescott National Forest must have trail-building fever because some 33 miles of trail have been reconstructed in 1990 alone. Erosion control devices have been installed, trail tread has been refurbished, some trail sections have been relocated. Also, a trailhead was constructed under a Challenge Cost-Share Partnership with equestrian groups. This day-use area compliments Groom Creek Horse Camp located just across the road, which, by-the-way is a 37-unit campground for individual and group equestrian users. It offers one loop for individual horseback riders and two loops for groups under a reservation system. Water, toilets, a parking area, tables and fire rings are among the amenities provided for campers. And the location is right in the heart of a popular system of trails in the Bradshaw Mountains.

Also in the Bradshaw Mountains, a self-guided tour of historic mining sites is available to motorists. The Prescott Chamber of Commerce helped develop this tour which goes to 15 historic sites. An alternative side trip offers five additional sites. There's a brochure available which acts as a guide, and signs along the way to offer a touch of history.

Currently, we are taking a close look at Juniper Mesa Wilderness. With help from the public, a plan to manage the area is in the works.



*Volunteers assist in cliff dwelling stabilization. Photo courtesy of Richard Lord.*



# Coconino National Forest

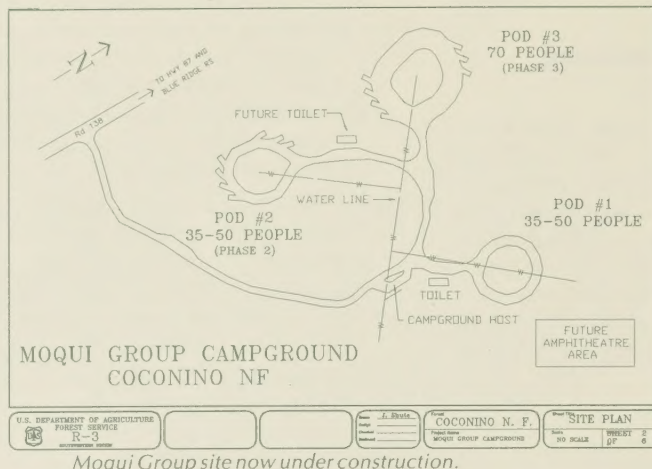
The Arizona Initiative and your tax dollars at work are most visible in the area of camping on the Coconino National Forest...more camping areas for people...a camp for horses...improved toilets and toilet systems...and a computerized recreation guide that operates like a video game to show and tell all about places to go on the forest.

Working with Winslow Kiwanis Club under the Challenge Cost-Share Program, the Coconino National Forest is proud to report the beginning of construction for the Moqui Group Camp Area on the Blue Ridge Ranger District. In addition, to answer the growing demand for more campgrounds, the camping season has been extended in some campgrounds to give more people more time to enjoy the forest.



Bonito Campground toilet improvements.

To make the sweet camping life sweeter, there has been a lot of work done in the toilet department on the forest. At Bonito Campground, north of Flagstaff, the toilet/water system has been upgraded, and one toilet modified for handicapped access. The toilets at Ashurst Lake have been replaced with a new composting type. Basically, the new kind is designed to convert wastes into compost which can be used as a fertilizer. And finally, funds have been designated specifically for the Sweet Smelling Toilet program (SST) ventilation system in many other Coconino toilets.



Moqui Group site now under construction.

The survey and design of an equestrian camp north of Flagstaff is underway. Its purpose—to provide a place where horseback riders can leave their horse trailers while they enjoy the many aspen-lined trails of Mount Elden and the San Francisco Peaks.

The scenic Mogollon Rim is getting more attention these days. The Forest Plan calls for an emphasis in recreation there. To date, a contract has been awarded for the area to be analyzed which will refine and expand Forest Plan direction.

Near Sedona, analysis continues for the Crescent Moon Recreation Area. The scenic former ranch on Oak Creek, currently closed to the public, may soon be open for all to enjoy as a picnic or overnight camping area. A nearby viewpoint at Midgley Bridge is getting a safety railing. Midgley Bridge overlooks some of the most awesome red rock country of Oak Creek Canyon. Thousands of tourists and photographers stop there each year.

Those who enjoy the wilderness experience may have noticed more rangers patrolling the more frequently used areas. Along those lines, the Coconino National Forest and Fairfield Snowbowl have entered into a cooperative program by sharing the cost of

a ranger at the top of the main ski lift to tell people about Arizona's rare alpine tundra.



San Francisco Peaks trailhead sign.

To help folks find and get a preview of all these places on the forest, a contract has been awarded for a computerized recreation guide. To go along with the computer, a series of Recreation Opportunity Guide sheets will be available at visitor centers and Forest Service offices for the public.

## Major Coconino Recreation Projects

Bonito Campground: water system/toilet rehabilitation	• \$45,000
Ashurst toilets: to be replaced with new composting type	• \$60,000
Equestrian Camp: survey and design	• \$20,000
Crescent Moon Recreation Area: survey and design	• \$50,000
Midgley Bridge: viewpoint safety railing	• \$25,000



## Coronado National Forest

Arizona's southern-most forest, the Coronado National Forest has always been popular for its great diversity. It seems to have everything from its gorgeous desert landscape to beautifully forested mountain hide-aways. Now there's even more reason to run for the border (or at least near there). Visitors will be able to get a taste of the old west when visiting the Safford Ranger District. An historic ranger station is being turned into a visitor information center—the Columbine Visitor Information Center, to be precise. We think it's neat because we'll be able to reach more hikers, picnickers, campers and the like with recreation information right on Swift Trail in the Pinaleno Mountains near Mount Graham. But you'll think it's neat because you'll be able to crawl around in an old, rustic building. There are also several "out buildings" of the same design and character that may provide an opportunity for visitors to experience how forest rangers of old accomplished some of their tasks. Look for this center to be in full operation this summer. In the meantime, the district is working with



*Barrier-free fishing access, Parker Canyon Lake*

volunteers to establish a "Ranger Campfire" program series that will originate from the facility and serve various campgrounds in the Pinaleno Mountains.

Another of the Coronado's jewel attractions is Parker Canyon Lake, a small 130-acre boating and fishing site with an "out-of-the-way" character for visitors looking for water recreation opportunities. The Arizona Recreation Initiative at work here can be seen by the new barrier-free facilities at the lake's busiest location,

Merritt Point. Improvements include new surfaced parking lots that accommodate vehicles with boat trailers and wheelchair access from the lot to shoreline facilities; boating docks; boat launching facilities; a fishing dock; restrooms; and a steel-walled shoreline reclamation and stabilization structure. This has been a major construction effort involving the cooperation of the contractor, two concessionaires, and the Sierra Vista Ranger District.

Elsewhere, one of the "hottest" visitor spots in southern Arizona is Sabino Canyon Recreation Area. More than a million people visit each year to hike, bike, picnic, ride the shuttle, play in the water, and enjoy the unique riparian ecosystem created by the spectacular canyon's water against the Tucson Valley desert. The Santa Catalina Ranger District, which manages the area, is supporting a nationally recognized volunteer naturalist program. This program specializes in taking information about the canyon's many natural features to elementary school children. Using a specially designed information kiosk outside the district office as a gathering point, volunteers are presenting programs about the desert tortoise and other reptiles, and panning for garnets. All this...an important part of the Arizona Initiative effort for us to be more available to visitors and to share our knowledge of the land.



*Watch this historic ranger station become the "Columbine Visitor Information Center" in the Pinaleno Mountains near Mount Graham.*



# Tonto National Forest



*Forest Service River Rangers providing information.*

Because of its proximity to the huge Phoenix metropolitan area, the Tonto National Forest is impacted and impacted hard by the recreation demands of an urban society. The Arizona Recreation Initiative has produced tremendous benefits for visitors. As a result of the Initiative, we have been able to serve the public better than we have in more than 10 years!

Let's talk about the Salt River. The Upper Salt River is a focal point for recreational activity. During the last decade, thousands of visitors have flocked here to enjoy swimming, fishing and especially white-water rafting. The Arizona Recreation Initiative has provided a highly skilled River Ranger to be in contact with visitors, remove trash, evaluate commercial outfitting activities, and monitor the condition of the area. The Ranger has been particularly effective in explaining no-trace camping procedures and in curtailing vehicular trespass into the Salt River Canyon Wilderness.

The Lower Salt River has benefited as well, especially through our River Education Specialist Program. The program works like

this... three Student Conservation Association volunteers and a seasonal supervisor patrol the river during the summer...the patrolling is done by canoe. To date, the crew has collected and removed more than



*A typical busy day on the Lower Salt River.*

8,000 pounds of litter and debris from the river, been in contact with more than 6,000 river users, removed some 33 navigation hazards, administered first aid to recreationists, and even made a river rescue. The river has never looked better, and we're getting the idea that folks like to see someone out there who knows about the river. This program is funded with \$6,100 from the Initiative, \$6,000 from Salt River Recreation, and \$250 from Desert Voyagers.

We've also begun a Horse Patrol Program to reach the more inaccessible areas of the Lower Salt River Recreation Area. Horses seem to be the most effective way to access

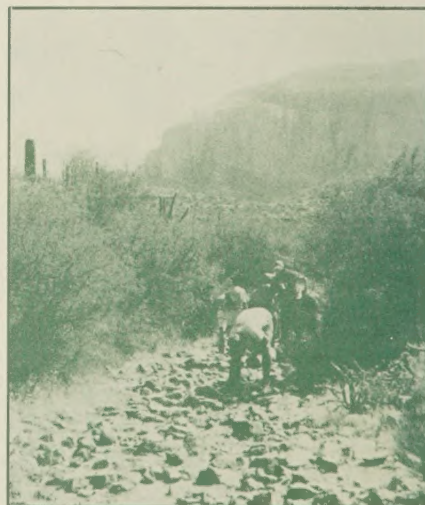
areas that are closed to motor vehicles, yet heavily used by recreationists. They also make a great ice-breaker for public contacts.

Several of our campground and picnic facilities have been in desperate need of attention. Thanks to the Initiative we have been able to re-roof buildings, replace plumbing, make facilities accessible to the physically challenged, and improve settings for campground programs. We expect to have a new group campground soon—we found the perfect spot on the northern portion of the Payson District.

Other projects in the planning stages are a visitor information center at Creek Fish Hatchery and a plan for managing caves around Red Lake.

We've been able to build boat ramps with Initiative money. One, measuring 15' x 160' has been constructed at the Sheriff's Air Station at Bartlett Lake. Another, a temporary boat ramp, has been constructed at Bachelor Cove on Roosevelt Lake. This ramp was necessary because of low water conditions.

And, have we built trails...miles and miles of trails—new ones, old ones, in wilderness, out of wilderness, through desert, over mountains—and, we've created lots of handouts to help you find them!



*Trail improvements on the Tonto National Forest.*

